



**COLUSA COUNTY CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION**

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Executive Director  
(530) 473-3927 Ext 200  
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January 11, 2001

Dear Children / Family Services Provider:

The Colusa County Children and Families Commission is pleased to issue the attached Request for Information (RFI), seeking responses from qualified organizations that wish to be considered for funding by the Commission. As explained in the RFI, the Commission will release approximately \$400,000 in funding this year to improve the lives of children prenatal to age five and their families, in accordance with the strategic plan as developed by the Children and Families Commission and their Advisory Council.

Organizations wishing to be considered for funding must submit a Letter of Interest in the format described in the RFI. A full proposal is not required at this time; we are only seeking basic information about your organization and an understanding of how you can contribute to the implementation of the strategic plan. **Letters of Interest must be received by the Colusa County Children and Families Commission office in Williams by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 31, 2001.** Late responses, faxes, and e-mail responses will not be accepted.

We encourage all organizations, individuals and service providers serving young children and their families to submit a Letter of Interest. If you have any questions about the RFI or if you would like further information about the Colusa County Children and Families Commission, please do not hesitate to call. You may contact Charlette Lauppe, Executive Director at (530) 473-3927, extension 200.

Sincerely,

Christy Scofield,  
Chair  
Colusa County  
Children and Families Commission



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# REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

## COLUSA COUNTY CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION

January 2001

### BACKGROUND

In 1998, the California Children and Families Act (also known as Proposition 10) was enacted, increasing taxes on tobacco products in order to provide the funds to create a comprehensive and integrated delivery system of information and services to promote early childhood development from prenatal to age 5. Colusa County is receiving approximately \$320,000 a year from these funds. Because funds have been accumulating for more than a year, a total of \$400,000 is now available for release to qualified service providers.

The Colusa County Children and Families Commission (referred to as simply “the Commission” throughout) was created in 1999 to evaluate the current and projected needs of young children and their families, develop a strategic plan that describes how the community needs will be addressed, determine how to expend local monies available from the state Children and Families Trust Fund, and evaluate the effectiveness of programs and activities funded in accordance with the strategic plan. The mission of the Commission is:

***The Colusa County Children and Families Commission is committed to enhancing the lives of all children prenatal to age five and their families through a countywide, comprehensive, integrated system of early childhood development.***

Proposition 10 funds must be expended in alignment with the strategic plan adopted in September 2000 by the Commission. The strategic plan clearly specifies that activities supported by the Commission must focus specifically on children prenatal to age 5 and their families in order to achieve one or more of the following four strategic results:

1. Improved Child Health: Healthy Children;
2. Improved Child Development: Children Learning and Ready for School;
3. Improved Family Functioning: Strong Families; and
4. Improved Systems: Integrated, Consumer-Oriented, Accessible Services.

This Request for Information (RFI) has been issued to enable any party interested in receiving funding from the Commission to describe how they can contribute to the achievement of the goals and objectives outlined in the strategic plan. The Commission will use the information provided in the responses to the RFI to determine which organizations will be invited to submit complete proposals for funding consideration.

## SERVICES AND PROJECTS TO BE CONSIDERED FOR FUNDING

In order to be considered for funding, the applicant must be capable of operating a program or project that implements one or more of the strategies contained in the Commission's strategic plan, focused specifically on children prenatal to age five and their families in Colusa County. Appendix B of this RFI contains a complete list of the strategies; programs and projects that are not directly linked to these strategies will not be considered. Respondents are strongly encouraged to review the strategic plan before submitting a letter of interest in order to gain a more complete understanding of the improvements for children and family services being sought.

As long as a direct relationship can be established to one or more strategies from the strategic plan, funding will be considered for many types of projects, individuals and organizations. The chart below outlines the main parameters for year 2001 funding from the Commission.

<b>Types of Requests</b>	<p>The Commission wants to be flexible and creative, and therefore will be open to funding many types of activities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Direct services to children and families</li><li>• Capital requests: expansion of physical space or purchase of equipment related to expansion of or improvement of services</li><li>• Systems development or capacity building efforts such as initiatives to plan and develop new services or materials, improve integration of services, increase outreach, increase technical assistance to service providers, and other such efforts.</li></ul>
<b>Size of Request</b>	<p>No minimum or maximum amount has been set for funding requests, up to the \$400,000 total available for allocation. However, applicants should recognize that the Commission places a very high priority on coordination with other funding sources so that Proposition 10 resources are used wherever practical to (a) attract funding from other sources so that the total monies available for early childhood development are increased, (b) fill gaps where no other sources of funding can be identified to provide high-priority programs and services, and/or (c) build self-sustaining services, defined as services that can establish a sustainable funding stream without relying on Proposition 10 monies.</p>
<b>Time Period for Funding</b>	<p>Applicants can request funding for up to a three-year period. Projects accepted for multi-year funding will be evaluated every six months and must continue to meet performance criteria to continue receiving funds.</p>
<b>Organization Type</b>	<p>Nonprofit organizations, associations (including joint ventures), for-profit businesses, educational institutions, and municipalities or units of government are welcome to apply. Nonprofit organizations will be required to show proof of their nonprofit status. For-profit businesses must have a current business license and employer identification number.</p>

<b>Multi-agency Collaboration</b>	The Commission will give preference to projects submitted by multi-agency collaborations that represent a true continuum of services over proposals submitted by individual agencies that represent fragmented services. The Commission also reserves the right to link agencies together and require a collaborative proposal that consolidates the services and capabilities of all of the agencies in order to be considered for funding.
<b>Qualifications</b>	Applicants, including all subcontractors, must be able to demonstrate significant experience in conducting projects similar to the one being proposed. New or startup organizations are welcome to apply, providing that the qualifications of the key staff involved in the project can be demonstrated. Organizations will also have to show proof of financial solvency.
<b>Supplanting of Funds</b>	Proposition 10 funds are intended to enhance existing services, and by law cannot supplant existing resources or create unnecessary duplication of services. Organizations selected for funding by the Commission will be required to certify in writing that funds received from the Commission will not be used to supplant existing resources.
<b>Other Requirements</b>	Organizations that are awarded funds by the Commission will be required to sign an agreement establishing accountability over the use of the funds, and must be willing to work with the Commission to implement evaluation models to objectively demonstrate the cost-effectiveness and overall efficacy of their services.

## HOW TO SUBMIT A LETTER OF INTEREST

In order to be considered for funding, a Letter of Interest must be submitted so that the Commission receives it **no later than 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 31, 2001**. One original letter and six copies should be submitted by mail or hand delivered; faxes, e-mails and photocopies will not be accepted.

Letters should be addressed to:

Colusa County Children and Families Commission  
 570 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
 P. O. Box 367  
 Williams, CA 95987  
 Re: Letter of Interest

Letters should be kept concise and simple; two or three pages are recommended. Letters cannot exceed five pages, except that organizations submitting an interest in multiple programs/projects on one letter will be granted one extra page per program or project. For example, an organization submitting a letter containing three project ideas is allowed up to seven pages. Please remember that the Letter of Interest is not intended to be a full proposal, and no funding decisions will be made solely based on the information in the letter. The purpose of the letter is simply to indicate to the Commission that your organization wishes to be considered for funding, and to provide basic information about your organization and

program/project ideas that will enable the Commission to make a fair determination as to whether to invite a full proposal.

Letters should conform exactly to the format contained in Appendix A to this RFI, addressing each of the following topics:

- Introduction to the mission, history, current programs and services, experience, and capabilities of the organization.
- A brief description of the project(s) that the organization wishes to be considered for funding from the Commission. Multiple programs and projects can be listed in one letter; it is not necessary (or desirable) to submit a separate letter for each program / project. For each program or project, reference the specific strategy or strategies from the September 2000 strategic plan that are being addressed by the project.
- A list of other organizations participating in the project and/or a brief description of efforts that will be made to coordinate services with other agencies offering similar or related services in Colusa County.
- The estimated total annual cost of the project (i.e. the total budget, combining all funding sources), and the estimated amount of funding that will be requested from the Commission. This should include a brief overview of other funding sources available for the project.
- Name, phone number, fax number, and e-mail address (if available) of the person that the Commission should contact if more information is needed.

The letter must be signed by the chief executive or an officer of the organization.

## THE FUNDING PROCESS

The steps the Commission will take in making funding decisions are outlined below, along with the projected timeframe for completing each step.

<u>Step</u>	<u>Timeframe</u>
1. <b>Letters of Interest.</b> All responses to this RFI received by the due date will be carefully reviewed by the Commission and used to determine which organizations and programs/projects will be asked to submit a complete application for funding.	January 31 – February 13, 2001
2. <b>Request for Applications.</b> A Request for Applications (RFA) packet will be distributed to those organizations selected based on their letter of interest. The RFA will prescribe the exact contents and format for applications for funding. A Proposers' Conference and technical assistance workshop will be offered to help * with preparing the application.	RFA released: February 20, 2001 Proposers' Conference: February 27, 2001 Technical assistance workshop: March 6, 2001 Responses due: March 23, 2001

Step

Timeframe

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 3. <b>Evaluation of Applications.</b> Applications received by the due date will be thoroughly reviewed by the Commission and scored according to the criteria published in the RFA. An interview of agency representatives or other steps may be taken to gather more information about the applications. | March 23 – April 20, 2001  |
| 4. <b>Award Decisions and Contracts.</b> The Commission will decide which applications will be funded, and the dollar amount of funding for each. Contracts must be executed with each organization before funding can be released.  | Award decisions to be made and posted by April 30, 2001. Contracts to be completed by May 31, with funding able to commence on June 1. |

Please note that the Commission is not required to invite a proposal from all organizations that submit a Letter of Interest. Alternatively, the Commission may ask two or more applicants to join together to submit a collaborative proposal as a condition to being allowed to submit a proposal.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Additional information, including a copy of the countywide strategic plan adopted by the Colusa County Children and Families Commission, can be obtained from the Commission's website at <http://www.ccfc.ca.gov/colusa>. More information about Proposition 10 and the statewide network of county Children and Families Commissions can also be obtained from the state-level California Children and Families Commission website at <http://www.ccfc.ca.gov>.

Questions about this RFI should be directed to:

Charlette Lauppe, Executive Director  
Colusa County Children and Families Commission  
P.O. Box 367  
570 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
Williams, CA 95987  
Phone: (530) 473-3927, extension 200  
Fax: (530) 473-5990  
E-mail: [clauppe@ncen.org](mailto:clauppe@ncen.org)

## APPENDIX A – LETTER OF INTEREST FORMAT

The required format for Letters of Interest submitted to the Colusa County Children and Families Commission is shown below. The letter should be printed on the organization's letterhead and must be signed by the chief executive or other officer of the organization.

Colusa County Children and Families Commission  
570 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
P.O. Box 367  
Williams, CA 95987

Dear Commissioners:

This letter is to signify that \_\_\_\_ (organization name) \_\_\_\_ wishes to be considered for funding from the Children and Families Commission.

### Organizational Overview

(Provide a brief introduction to the mission, history, current programs and services, experience, and capabilities of the organization in this section.)

### Proposed Program(s) and Project(s)

(Provide a brief description of the project(s) that the organization wishes to be considered for funding from the Commission. For each program or project, reference the specific strategy or strategies from the Commission's September 2000 strategic plan that are addressed by the project.)

### Collaborative Efforts

(Provide a list of other organizations participating in the project(s) and/or a brief description of efforts that will be made to coordinate services with other agencies offering similar or related services in Colusa County. If no formal collaborative activities involving other organizations are anticipated, write "None" in this section.)

### Estimated Budget and Funding Plan

The estimated total annual budget for the project, combining all funding sources, is \$\_\_\_\_\_. Of this amount, we anticipate that we will request \$\_\_\_\_\_ in funding from the Commission, which represents \_\_\_\_% of the total budget. The remaining funds needed to conduct the project are expected to come from the following sources: (list other funding sources available for the project and the estimated dollar amount to receive from each source). **(Note: if multiple programs or projects are presented in the letter, provide total annual budget and Commission funding request amounts separately for each program/project.)**

(If any special opportunities exist for leveraging or blending of funds so that Commission support can be matched in whole or in part by other sources, please describe the opportunities in this section.)



Certifications and Contact Information

We certify that any funding ultimately granted by the Commission will be used only to increase the availability and/or effectiveness of services; no funding from the Commission will be used to supplant existing resources.

Should additional information be required, please contact:

(Name and title of contact person)  
(Address)  
(Telephone number)  
(Fax number)  
(E-mail address, if one is available)

Sincerely,

(signature)

(typed name)

(title)

## APPENDIX B – STRATEGIES TO BE CONSIDERED FOR FUNDING

The strategic plan for early childhood development in Colusa County contains nine long-range goals that will be pursued to enhance the early growth experiences of children, grouped into four overarching strategic result areas. For each goal, short-term objectives were developed to show what results would be sought during the next two years, along with a set of strategies or actions to be implemented in order to achieve each objective. Letters of Interest must identify the specific strategy or strategies being targeted, not just the goal or objective involved. More complete information is available in the full strategic plan.

Goals	Objectives	Strategies
<b>STRATEGIC RESULT 1. IMPROVED FAMILY FUNCTIONING: STRONG FAMILIES</b>		
1.1 Parents and other caregivers are prepared and supported to fulfill their roles in developing healthy, happy, resilient and well-adjusted children.	1.1.1 Promote community-based, accessible parent education. “Community-based” means that services are available in or near each community in the county. “Accessible” includes education during hours and in languages that enable parents and caregivers to use the services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide home visitation and in-home support for parents</li> <li>• Provide incentives and transportation to increase attendance at parent education programs</li> <li>• Offer special programs and incentives to involve dads in parenting</li> <li>• Offer workshops on individual parenting topics</li> <li>• Involve grandparents, surrogate parents and other caregivers in parent support</li> </ul>
1.2 Whole communities demonstrate a strong commitment to the well-being of children and families by working together to promote and support parental involvement and cooperation. This goal explicitly seeks cross-cultural involvement and cooperation.	<p>1.2.1 Develop playgroups or other forums in each community that enable parents to support each other.</p> <p>1.2.2 Expand the number of public areas with age-appropriate play equipment for children age 0-5 in each community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide assistance in forming and/or sustaining play groups, parent co-ops and other forums</li> <li>• Enhance library-based programs to offer family activities and parent support</li> <li>• Involve churches in sponsoring family activities and parent support forums</li> <li>• Add/upgrade age-appropriate play equipment in existing community parks and public recreation areas for children ages 0-5</li> </ul>

Goals	Objectives	Strategies
<b>STRATEGIC RESULT 2. IMPROVED CHILD DEVELOPMENT: CHILDREN LEARNING AND READY FOR SCHOOL</b>		
2.1 Children live in safe, nurturing environments. “Living environments” include all places where children spend a significant amount of time, such as homes and child care settings.	2.1.1 Increase the knowledge and skill of caretakers on nurturing and safety. “Caretakers” includes the full spectrum of parents, grandparents, guardians, child care providers, neighbors, and others that may be caring for children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer bilingual parenting programs in all communities, using the strategies listed under Strategic Result 1, Objective 1.1.1</li> <li>• Provide specialized training on nurturing and safety to professionals that work with parents and young children</li> <li>• Develop a media campaign to reach all adults on nurturing and safety issues</li> </ul>
2.2 Children live in environments that meet their cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development needs.	2.2.1 Increase the knowledge and skill of caretakers on cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development needs. This should include understanding of child development at different ages, and also honor the role of the parent as the primary caregiver and role model.  2.2.2 Increase access to quality preschools for all children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use mobile classrooms to go into the local communities to perform early screening and assessments</li> <li>• Engage the entire family in literacy efforts and education of young children</li> <li>• Distribute a “gift pack” of quality books for pre-kindergarten children</li> <li>• Provide specialized training to professionals on early childhood development</li> <li>• Blend state preschool and Head Start in each community</li> <li>• Set up satellite preschool sites with universal access</li> </ul>
<b>STRATEGIC RESULT 3. IMPROVED CHILD HEALTH: HEALTHY CHILDREN</b>		
3.1 All children are born with the best possible physical health at birth.	3.1.1 Increase early access to adequate prenatal health care for pregnant women.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use WIC visits to provide educational information about healthy pregnancies</li> <li>• Provide home visits by nurses to pregnant women</li> <li>• Increase the number of medical providers, including mid-level providers</li> <li>• Support existing medical and dental services in order to keep services in the County</li> <li>• Sponsor a vehicle dedicated to transporting families to medical, dental and other family service appointments</li> <li>• Expand use and promotion of travel vouchers to get families to preventative and diagnostic care appointments</li> </ul>

Goals	Objectives	Strategies
3.2 Children remain healthy during their formative years from birth to age 5.	3.2.1 Increase access to medical and dental care for children age 0-5.  3.2.2 Increase the knowledge and skill of parents regarding child health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of the strategies listed for the previous objective are intended to also address this objective</li> <li>• Use WIC visits to provide educational information about child health</li> <li>• Provide home visits by nurses to families with children</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>STRATEGIC RESULT 4. IMPROVED SYSTEMS: INTEGRATED, CONSUMER-ORIENTED, ACCESSIBLE SERVICES</b></p>		
4.1 People are able to access available services.	4.1.1 Increase public knowledge about resources that are available and how to access those resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add information about local resources to the Kit for New Parents provided by the State Children &amp; Families Commission and widely distribute the kit</li> <li>• Provide a resource guide in the phone book</li> <li>• Conduct a media campaign to provide information on resources and services</li> <li>• Collaborate with schools, service providers and local businesses to educate them about available resources</li> </ul>
4.1 People are able to access available services (continued)	4.1.2 Increase the ability for people to physically reach available resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide transit vouchers to remove cost as a barrier to using public transportation</li> <li>• Sponsor a vehicle dedicated to transporting families to medical, dental and other family service appointments</li> </ul>
4.2 Services are culturally and linguistically sensitive and appropriate.	4.2.1 Increase the knowledge and skill of service providers regarding cultural competence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide training, support and technical assistance to service providers on customer care and cultural sensitivity</li> <li>• Add bilingual capabilities to selected services, such as the transit system, where Spanish-speaking people have the greatest language barriers</li> </ul>

Goals	Objectives	Strategies
4.3 Families experience effective coordination and communication between services they access.	4.3.1 Establish the systems and infrastructure needed to allow service providers to regularly share information and coordinate planning efforts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct regular coordinating meetings with all local service providers to assess the progress of implementing strategies, share information, and coordinate planning work</li> <li>• Develop and maintain a website with complete information about local services where service providers can post information about meetings, changes in services, etc.</li> </ul>